DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 267 023 SP 027 176

AUTHOR Giddings, Louise R.
TITLE Module Utilization in College Teaching.
PUB DATE [85]
NOTE 21p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Higher Education; *Instructional Materials; Language Arts; *Learning Modules; *Learning Strategies; Teacher Education; *Units of Study

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to explore the concept of the module as an instructional unit appropriate for use in college teaching. Although modules do not appear to be widely in use at the present time, the modular approach does offer promise for implementation at the college level. Thus, the paper calls attention to the concept of the module and its advantages in college teaching. The modular concept is further clarified by the presentation of a sample teacher education module and, finally, the paper explores the possibilities for use of modules at the college level. (Author)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED267023

MODULE UTILIZATION IN COLLEGE TEACHING

Louise R. Giddings, Assistant Professor
Education Division
Medgar Evers College
The City University of New York

SP 026 179

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

L R. Giddings

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

This paper seeks to explore the concept of the module as an instructional unit appropriate for use in college teaching. Although modules do not appear to be widely in use at the present time, the modular approach does offer promise for implementation at the college level. Thus, the paper calls attention to the concept of the module and its advantages in college teaching. The modular concept is further clarified by the presentation of a sample teacher education module and, finally, the paper explores the possibilities for use of modules at the college level.

A module is a self-contained and independent unit of instruction which is developed around a few well-defined objectives. Thus, materials and instructional activities needed to achieve the objectives are crucial to modular development, and this content is limited only by the stated objectives. Although outlines for modules tend to vary, a sample module outline is given below.

Components of a Module

1. Statement of Purpose
2. Prerequisites
3. Objectives
4. Pre-test
5. Materials
6. Program or Activities
7. Post-test

The following is a brief discussion of each of the components of a module:

Statement of Purpose

The statement of purpose should relate the content of the module to the specific educational needs and interests of the student. The statement

may also indicate how the module contributes to the overall course or program of which it is a part. The task of the module developer is, therefore, to describe the significance of the module.

Prerequisites

The particular skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed before beginning a module should be stated. The prerequisites should be of assistance in helping the student decide whether or not he is prepared to undertake the module.

Objectives

The clear statement of instructional objectives is the focal point in the development and use of a module. If the developer wishes, objectives may be stated in behavioral terms.[1] Behaviorally stated objectives define what observable behaviors are required on the part of the student as a result of completing the module and the conditions under which the student must perform. Moreover, specific behavioral objectives indicate acceptable standards of performance.

---

[1]Helpful information on stating behavioral objectives may be found in Robert Mager. Preparing Instructional Objectives. Palo Alto, Calif.: Fearon Publishers, 1962.

Pre-test

A diagnostic pre-test may be developed as part of some instructional modules. The pre-test will provide the instructor and the student with information concerning the student's preparation for undertaking the module. It is possible that some students may not need to take the module because of outstanding performance on the pre-test.

Materials and Resources

Materials and resources needed to complete the module should be listed. Textbooks, journals, audio-visual materials, field sites, agencies and resource persons, for example, may be indicated. Lists of resources should be supplemented by notes on acquisition or on how the resources can be obtained if necessary.

Activities or Program

Teaching modules may be presented in a variety of forms. Some may consist of a set of instructions to students for completing independent learning activities. Others may involve audio tapes, film loops and other materials to help integrate the learning experiences of the module. Audio tapes may contain presentations and comments by resource persons,

recordings of mini-lessons, conversations and dialogues. Still other programs may consist entirely of programmed instruction lessons to be completed by the student. The module may direct students to such experiences as reading assignments, small group discussions or projects, visits to cultural sites, school visits and observations, independent study, and written assignments or assignments to be developed in audio and/or visual form.

Post-test

Some type of evaluative post-test which relates to the objectives for the unit should be provided. The post-test may emerge in a variety of forms. Pencil and paper tests, oral quizzes or presentations, and performance tests where students are observed for competence in specific skills are examples of forms which post-tests may take.

The components of a module described above are important aspects of any unit of instruction. However, there is room for variation in the format of a module just as there is room for variation in the way a module is completed by its user. Thus, instructors who choose to develop and utilize modules should feel free to employ creativity and innovation in working with modules.

An assessment statement related to an instructor's use of a particular module can be helpful to colleagues and others interested in the module. The statement which can be appended to a module on file may include such items as:

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

1. The time required to complete the module.

2. The number of students involved in completing the module during a given semester or quarter.

3. The degree of competency achieved by students as indicated by performance on module assignments and the post-test.

4. Any other pertinent information relative to the development and utilization of the module.

The use of modules can be advantageous to institutions and instructors who employ them. Some advantages offered to the teacher are stated by Creager and Murray:

1. The use of modules provides the opportunity for organizing numerous sequences of experiences to reflect special interests of the teacher or the student.

2. Self instructional units allow the teacher to focus on student deficiencies in subject matter that must be corrected and also serve to eliminate the necessity of covering subject matter already known by the student.

3. The modular approach provides a way of assessing the students' progress in learning.

4. Modules reduce the routine aspects of instruction, leaving the teacher free to engage in personal contact with the student.

5. The independent nature of self-instructional units facilitates the updating of study materials without major revisions.

6. Modules can serve as models for teachers who wish to develop their own materials and insert their own individuality.

7. Self instructional units are easily exchanged between institutions.[2]

---

[2] Joan Creager and Darrell L. Murray. Modules. Washington, D.C.: The Commission on Undergraduate Education in the Biological Sciences, 1971, pp. 9-10.

The module allows for individualization of instruction. Even where the same module is given to an entire class, students may complete the the module at their own pace and they may engage in varied experiences related to the achievement of modular objectives. One or two modules can be used with a traditional college course or a course can consist entirely of a series of prescribed modules. In any case, the modular approach places each student in a position where he must be independent and responsible for his own learning.

A Sample Module

for

Teacher Education: Language Arts

WRITING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A Language Arts Module

by

Louise R. Giddings

Purpose of the Module

This module introduces prospective teachers to various types of writing experiences for children in the elementary school. Both creative and functional writing are explored along with some of the conventions and mechanics essential to the writing process. The specific behavioral objectives for the unit are listed below.

Prerequisites

Prospective teachers preparing to undertake this module should have completed a basic college freshman level course in English composition.

Objectives

The behaviors which prospective teachers should be able to demonstrate upon completion of this module include:

1. Design a writing experience for primary grades.

2. Describe some values of creative writing for children.

3. Explain and give an example of patterned writing.

4. Explain and give an example of clustering

5. Write two poems illustrative of types of poetry writing appropriate for the elementary school program.

6. Describe situations or experiences that lend themselves to practical or functional writing.

7. Describe steps children should follow in writing a report.

8. Identify items to be dealt with in revising and proofreading children's written work.

Pre-Test

1. Discuss in writing, the meaning of each of the following terms.

a. writing center
b. experience chart writing
c. patterned writing
d. clustering
e. haiku
f. cinquain
g. proofreading
h. limerick
i. revision
j. free-verse
k. Sustained Silent Writing
l. functional writing

2. Complete the following TRUE-FALSE exercise.

TRUE__FALSE

a. Non print media are one way to encourage written expression. _____

b. Children should avoid patterned writing, for it will inhibit their creativity. _____

c. Independent composition activity cards are used only for story writing ideas. _____

d. There are three major components of a composition lesson. _____

e. Adequate motivation and stimulation will guarantee quality writing._____

f. Writing of stories and poems is a complete composition program._____

g. Revision and proofreading are synonymous terms. _____

h. Creative writing should be thought of as an extra attraction for the language arts program..

i. Experience chart writing should begin after children have mastered handwriting and spelling skills. _____

j. Experience writing involves interrelatedness of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. _____

---

3. Discuss how you would introduce one form of syllabic poetry writing to an intermediate grade elementary school class..

Resources and Materials

1. Required Reading Material

Burns, Paul C., Betty D. Roe and Elinor P. Ross. Teaching Reading in Today's Elementary Schools. 3rd. ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1984, Chapter 5.

Burns, Paul C. and Betty L. Broman. The Language Arts in Childhood Education. 5th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1983, Chapter 7.

Giddings, Louise. "Creative Writing in the Elementary School." Unpublished paper, 1986.

2. Instructional Media to be Collected

Trade books that may be used to motivate writing.

Pictures

Sample composition Activity Cards

Samples of children's writings to be evaluated

Specialized references on composition

Activities for Development of the Module

Readings:

The student will complete the required readings listed in this module.

Part 1.

The student will:

1. Elaborate on the terms listed in the pre-test.

2. Discuss the values of creative writing for children in the elementary school.

3. Write one short composition of patterned writing.

4. Write one short composition using clustering.

5. Write one haiku poem and one cinquain poem..

6. Record an experience story dictated by a child or small group of children. Write or type the story and share it with the class.

Part II.

The student will:

1. Discuss specific situations in the elementary school which lend themselves to functional writing.

2. Prepare an independent activity card for children to use in some aspect of functional writing.

3. Write a short composition on a given topic.

4. Evaluate samples of children's writings with peers in a small group. The evaluation guide on page 231 of the Burns and Broman text or adaptations thereof may be used in evaluating children's work.

Post Test

1. Use one item listed in this module under "Materials - Instructional Media to be Collected " with a child or small group of children.

   Indicate how the material was used to assist the child or children in writing development. (Oral presentation)

2. Complete the written post-test to be supplied by the instructor.

THE Future of the Module in College Teaching

If colleges and college instructors are committed to quality teaching and to implementing varied approaches to instruction in order to meet the needs, interests and abilities of students, then the module does have a future in college teaching. For the many instructors who seek ways of doing things a little differently in the college classroom, the module may offer an alternative. The points below may well be worthy of consideration.

The module allows instructors to plan for class sessions where students are involved and take more responsibility for exchange of ideas than in the traditional approach. With modular programs students are informed in advance of unit objectives and are guided to complete various learning activities to assist them in achieving these objectives. Having students pursue these activities and share the experiences with others can certainly enhance classroom interaction.

The modular approach can make the instructor's role a more positive one. The traditional role of the college professor has been that of a lecturer - a dispenser of knowledge. There are occasions when the lecture is appropriate. However, one might question how necessary or appropriate it is for a professor

to spend numerous class periods lecturing to students on material which is stated in the textbook as is so often the case. The modular approach forces instructors to employ varied strategies and approaches in working with students.

The modular approach places greater responsibility on the students for actively seeking knowledge and developing new skills, habits and attitudes. Students are presented with a program for study and action. If the goals of the program are to be achieved, then the student must realize that unless he puts forth the effort, the goals will not be realized. Simply attending a lecture, reading a chapter in a textbook, and taking a test is not sufficient to acquire the in-depth knowledge needed to share, interpret, and evaluate learnings with peers and instructors.

Even when more traditional methods are utilized in college teaching, a module can be inserted occasionally in the course structure. At times a module may be given to introduce a topic which is not a part of the required textbook and which,perhaps, would not be studied except with an independent learning unit. At other times, a module may be given to enliven a class, give students learning options, or to allow students to pursue special interests. Perhaps, the use of occasional modules, more than any other use of modules in college teaching,

may find the greatest favor with instructors because this permits them to enrich existing programs without radical changes.

Some may feel that the module is too structured- too geared to the "systems-approach." It should be noted that the developer of a module has freedom to design a module in any manner he sees fit. Some modules may be highly structured and programmed, others may allow for much independence, originality and creativity on the part of students in reaching objectives. The module embraces the three phases of any good instructional program, namely, objectives, methods and evaluation.

The module can be a powerful tool in the hands of an enlightened, competent, and imaginative teacher. In the hands of a less able teacher, however, the module can be nothing more than a new name for the same old way of doing things. Much time, thought and effort must be put into the development and utilization of a module. The challenge of modular instruction exists for the creative teacher.

Bibliography

Bloom, B.S. (ed.) Taxonomy of Education Objectives, Handbook I: Cognitive Domain. New York: David McKay Co., 1956.

Creager, Joan and Darrell Murray. Modules. Washington, D.C.: The Commission on Undergraduate Education in the Biological Sciences, 1971.

Eggen, Paul, Donald Kauchak, and R. Harder. Strategies for Teachers. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1974.

Jacobsen, David et al. Methods of Teaching: A Skills Approach. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1985.

Johnson, R.B. and S. Johnson. Toward Individualized Learning: Developers Guide to Self-Instruction. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975.

Kibler, R. et al. Objectives for Instruction and Evaluation. Boston, Allyn and Bacon, 1974.

Mager, Robert F. Preparing Instructional Objectives. Palo Alto, Calif.: Fearon Publishers, 1962.

Popham, W. James and E. L. Baker. Planning an Instructional Sequence. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1970.

Bibliography

Bloom, B.S. (ed.) Taxonomy of Education Objectives, Handbook I: Cognitive Domain. New York: David McKay Co., 1956.

Creager, Joan and Darrell Murray. Modules. Washington, D.C.: The Commission on Undergraduate Education in the Biological Sciences, 1971.

Eggen, Paul, Donald Kauchak, and R. Harder. Strategies for Teachers. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1974.

Jacobsen, David et al. Methods of Teaching: A Skills Approach. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1985.

Johnson, R.B. and S. Johnson. Toward Individualized Learning: Developers Guide to Self-Instruction. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975.

Kibler, R. et al. Objectives for Instruction and Evaluation. Boston, Allyn and Bacon, 1974.

Mager, Robert F. Preparing Instructional Objectives. Palo Alto, Calif.: Fearon Publishers, 1962.

Popham, W. James and E. L. Baker. Planning an Instructional Sequence. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1970.